

REMARKS

The Applicants thank the Examiner for the thorough consideration given the present application. Claims 1-25 and 28 are pending. Claims 15, 22, and 25 are amended. Claim 1 is independent. The Examiner is respectfully requested to reconsider the rejections in view of the amendments and remarks set forth herein.

Reasons for Entry of Amendments

At the outset, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered into the Official File in view of the fact that the amendments to the claims automatically place the application in condition for allowance.

In the alternative, if the Examiner does not agree that this application is in condition for allowance, it is respectfully requested that this Amendment be entered for the purpose of appeal. This Amendment reduces the issues on appeal by placing the claims in compliance with 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This Amendment was not presented at an earlier date in view of the fact that Applicants did not fully appreciate the Examiner's position until the Final Office Action was reviewed.

Allowable Subject Matter

The Examiner states that claims 1-14, 16-21 and 28 are allowed.

Rejection Under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph

Claims 15 and 22-25 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph. This rejection is respectfully traversed.

In response, claims 15, 22, and 25 are amended herein to correct each of the deficiencies pointed out by the Examiner.

Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejections under 35 U.S.C. §112, second paragraph are respectfully requested.

All claims of the present application are in condition for allowance.

CONCLUSION

All of the stated grounds of rejection have been properly traversed, accommodated, or rendered moot. It is believed that a full and complete response has been made to the outstanding Office Action, and that the present application is in condition for allowance.

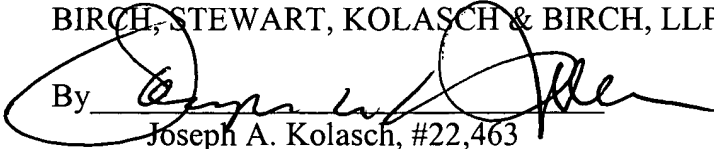
If the Examiner believes, for any reason, that personal communication will expedite prosecution of this application, he is invited to telephone Carl T. Thomsen (Reg. No. 50,786) at (703) 205-8000.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.17, particularly extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

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